

Harrison Oburn House  
915-17 Lexington Avenue  
First Ward Neighborhood  
Altoona  
Blair County  
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-5804

HABS  
PA,  
7-ALTO,  
31-

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HARRISON OBURN HOUSE

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31-  
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Location: 915-17 Lexington Avenue

Date of Erection: 1889

Description: This elaborate double house has various attributes of the larger single houses of the day. There is a hipped roof with projecting gables and a gable dormer to give the roofline complexity. There is a pair of two-story hexagonal projecting bays on the front, and the third-floor gable roof extends to cover them. A one-story porch spans the two bays and covers the two entrances, making the house appear as one. The structure is wood frame with a brick veneer, the windows have segmental arches, and there is a bracketed cornice.

History: Harrison Oburn, a grocer who lived at 810 Lexington Ave., built this double house to rent out in 1889, according to tax records. Occupants of No. 915 in 1901 included George W. Barto, a flagman, his wife Martha, and three boarders: tile setter Frank White, department store cashier Amanda Thompson, and slater Charles Davis. No. 917 was rented by painter Edward Hoine, his wife Hannah, two children, and a married daughter and her husband. Boarders included David Noll, a shophand, Ralph Beckley, a car builder, and Beckley's wife and baby. In 1903, Oburn's heirs sold each half of the house to a different owner.

Sources: Maps: 1888, 1894. City directories. Tax assessment records. Deed books: 51/304, 143/112, 313/368, 321/166, 467/347. U.S. Census, 1900.

Project Information: This report was part of a larger project to document the city of Altoona, Pennsylvania. The project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER), Robert Kapsch, chief, at the request of America's Industrial Heritage Project (AIHP), Randy Cooley, director. An overview of the history of the city (HABS No. PA-5784) and an overview of the first ward neighborhood (HABS No. PA-5788) provide context for these buildings as well as a comprehensive list of sources. See also additional HABS reports on buildings in the city and other neighborhoods.

This report was prepared by HABS Senior Historian Alison K. Hoagland, project leader and editor, in the summer of 1989. Hoagland's and other project historians' work was published as Railroad City: Four Historic Neighborhoods in Altoona, Pennsylvania (Washington, D.C.: HABS/HAER, National Park Service, 1990), edited by Kim E. Wallace, supervisory historian, and Sara Amy Leach, HABS historian.